

In the Claims:

Please cancel claim 3 and amend the following claims:

- Sub E1*
C1
1. (Twice Amended) A method of improving an array of porous polymer pads used in binding assays, said improvement comprising:
 - a. providing said array of porous polymer pads on the surface of a solid support; wherein said porous polymer pads are functionalized;
 - b. binding a specific substance to each of said porous polymer pads;
 - c. freezing said array of porous polymer pads on said solid support; and,
 - d. drying said array of porous polymer pads on said solid support at reduced pressure;wherein, said freeze-drying increases the pore size of said porous polymer pads.
 2. (Twice Amended) An array of freeze-dried porous polymer pads on a solid support, comprising a specific substance bound to each of the porous polymer pads prepared using the steps of claim 1.
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- Sub E1*
C2
4. (Amended) The array of claim 2 wherein said specific substance is a probe.
 5. (Amended) A method for increasing the pore size of the porous polymer pads in an array used in binding assays, said method comprising:
 - a. providing said array of porous polymer pads on the surface of a solid support; wherein, said porous polymer pads are functionalized;
 - b. covalently binding a specific substance to said array of porous polymer pads;
 - c. freezing said array of porous polymer pads on said surface; and,
 - d. drying said array of porous polymer pads on said surface at reduced pressure.
 6. (Amended) The method of claim 5 wherein said freezing is at liquid nitrogen temperatures and said drying is by sublimation.
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- C3 Sub E1*
- (New) The array of claim 4 wherein said probe is a polynucleotide.